

**Memorandum of the Meeting
Regular Study Session/Meeting
Twenty-Eighth Town Council of Highland
Monday, December 19, 2016**

The regular study session of the Twenty-Eighth Town Council of the Town of Highland was convened at the regular place, the Highland Municipal, 3333 Ridge Road, Highland, Indiana, in the plenary meeting chambers on **Monday, December 19, 2016** at the time of 7:10 o'clock p.m.

Silent Roll Call: Councilors Mark Herak, Steve Wagner, Konnie Kuiper and Bernie Zemen were present. Councilor Dan Vassar was absent owing to illness. The Clerk-Treasurer Michael W. Griffin was present to memorialize the proceedings.

Also present: Susan Murovic, Advisory Board of Zoning Appeals; and Ed Dabrowski, IT Consultant (contract), were present.

Additional persons present: Mr. Matt Felder of View Outdoor and James L. Wieser, Esq., Thomas Crowel, Crowel Insurance Agency, Inc.; John Banasiak, Erich Swisher, and Randy Stewart of the Metropolitan Police Department and the Donald Sheppard Memorial Chapter of the Fraternal Order of Police, were also present.

General Substance of Matters Discussed

1. **Presentation of Multi-peril Insurance Lines.** Thomas Crowel of Crowel Insurance presented the terms of renewal for the Insurance lines package that covered property and casualty coverage, fleet (motor vehicle) coverage, and special liability lines associated with officers' error and omissions. Mr. Crowel noted that the total package as proposed would be lower than the current year by approximately \$8,000. He noted that this proposal did not account for the pending acquisition of four heavy-duty trucks by Public Works. The coverage period is January 1 to December 31, 2017. It was noted that Bliss McKnight was one of the underwriters.

The Town Council President instructed that the matter be placed on the agenda for the December 28, 2016 meeting.

2. **Discussion with Matt Felder from View Outdoor Advertising, 1000 E. 80th Place, Suite 700N, Merrillville, Indiana.** Mr. Felder wishes to discuss property that View Outdoor acquired on Indianapolis Boulevard. *This is a follow-up from his initial presentation and discussion with the Town Council at its study session of November 21, 2016.*

James L. Wieser, Esq., attorney for View Outdoor, discussed a proposal from View Outdoor in response to the colloquy between Matt Felder and the Town Council, which occurred at the Study Session of Monday, November 21, 2016. It was noted at that meeting, Councilor Vassar, with leave from the Town Council, indicated that the Town Council inquired about some of the property located at 8117 8148 and 8200 Indianapolis Boulevard to landscape it aesthetically, in a fashion like the east side of Indianapolis Boulevard, directly across from the property being discussed. It was further noted that the discussion included an exploration of whether View Outdoor could support in some fashion the construction of a monument sign also similar to the one on the east side of Indianapolis Boulevard, across from the site being discussed.

Mr. Wieser reported View Outdoor's proposal to retain or lease a small portion of the property at the subject addresses to allow for the construction of an outdoor sign owned by View Outdoor, and to then convey the balance of the property to the town to be used as it wished.

The discussion between and among the Town Council, Mr. Wieser and Mr. Felder included whether some of the property was a wetland. It was noted that the wetland status was not formally identified, but it was speculated that it may not be sufficient in size to come under the regulations. The discussion further included the character of any liability that may be

attached to the conveyed property. Mr. Wieser and Mr. Felder represented that all encumbrances would be removed before any conveyance and a warrant deed would be the instrument of conveyance.

Councilor Wagner inquired about any buildings or structures that might be on the property. Mr. Felder indicated that he did not intend to raze any structures and that the property would be conveyed with existing buildings and structures.

It was still further noted that View Outdoor understood that it would need to seek a use variance under the current governing zoning code, which would come to the Town Council for review and action.

The Town Council President thanked Mr. Wieser and Mr. Felder and indicated that the Council would consider the proposal further and advise.

3. **Presentation and request for certain compensation and benefit matters from Sergeant Randy Stewart, President, Highland Donald Sheppard Memorial F.O.P Lodge 122.** *Sgt. Stewart met with the Town Council at its study session of Monday, September 19, 2016. At that time, Sgt. Stewart asked that the salary and wages for the Police Department be segregated and detached from the rest of the municipal workforce. He further asked that the Metropolitan Police force be given 6% increase.*

Sgt. Stewart reiterated his presentation made to the Town Council at its study session of September 19, 2016. Sgt. Stewart restated that he hoped for a six percent increase for the Police Department and that the compensation be segregated from the rest of the municipal workforce. He further requested that the raises requested apply to the ranks of Patrol Officer First Class and above. He further requested that an additional one percent be used to corporals and above to create a greater incentive for officers to seek promotion.

He supported the request for separate treatment by referring to the recent car wreck suffered by Officer John Swisher, when an impaired driver collided head on with the officer. Sgt. Stewart indicated that the risk that the accident represents supports the compensation for police officers being separated from the compensation for all other municipal work force.

During discussion between and among the Town Council and Sergeant Stewart, it was estimated that 60 to 66% of police officers reside in the Town.

4. **Discuss Information Technology services and the CBL Consulting Contract. The proposal is for one year, January to December 2017.** The Town Council reviewed the proposed one-year agreement for services. It was noted that the charges under the terms of the agreement for all the services, will be paid as a monthly fee to CBL Consulting, Inc., in the monthly amount of Four thousand dollars (\$4,000), a 2.6% percent increase over the current fee. This follows increases of 2.6% in 2016, increases of 4.10% in 2015 and 4.28% in 2014. The term proposed is one year. This could be delayed for a study session.

The Town Clerk-Treasurer discussed whether the Town Council policy regarding CBL also being a reseller of equipment in addition to the consulting role. It was noted that it is limited but the Clerk-Treasurer was seeking a clarification under the terms of the agreement.

The discussion included a consideration of establishing a full-time position for information technology management. It was noted that information technology is an essential component for municipal services delivery, so insinuated, that this is an area in which there needs to be greater organization capacity, including management and planning of equipment rotations, purchasing and training.

Mr. Dabrowski indicated that his proposal is month to month, so it could be curtailed with notice in the event that the Town Council would move to have a full-time position serve this function.

It was stated that this agreement could be slated for the agenda for the meeting on December 28.

5. **Discussion of renewal of Alpine Amusement Company, Inc.** The Clerk-Treasurer presented for the Community Events Commission the proposal from Alpine Amusement for a four-year contract to provide rides and games. The agreement provides for payment to the Town of 30% of gross receipts from these activities. This is unchanged from expiring agreement. It was noted that there was a stand-alone agreement for its work at the October 2016 event too. It was noted that the Fire Chief and the Parks and Recreation Superintendent were favorably disposed toward this amusement provider.

During the discussion, Mr. Crowel, suggested that certain terms be included in the agreement and the coverage reflect the practice of a \$5,000,000 rather than the \$3,000,000 that is printed in the agreement.

6. **Request for Honoraria to be paid.** The Clerk-Treasurer provided the excerpt of the minutes of the meeting of December 8, 2016 of the Community Events Commission where it approved recommending the following honoraria be paid as indicated. The Clerk-Treasurer reminded that the Town Council would need to formally approve these in order for them to be paid.

In addition, it was noted that the Community Events Commission approved an honorarium to be paid to Councilor Wagner for his last minute standing in for the Santa Claus who did not attend. Councilor Wagner declined any honorarium for this or any future service he may render as the stand-in.

The following stipends were noted. There was no objection to placing these on the agenda of the December 28 meeting for Town Council action.

Lady Shriners:	\$200.00
Michigan City Shriners:	\$200.00
Parks and Recreation Dept.:	\$500.00 (Donation Fund)
Public Works Dept.:	\$300.00 (Donation Fund)
Bishop Noll Band:	\$200.00
Explorers Post:	\$200.00
Hobart Shriners:	\$200.00
Volunteers in Police Services:	\$200.00
Highland High School Band:	\$200.00

- **Discuss ways and means for 2017, known budgetary changes, and workforce compensation.** The Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer discussed the likely available resources for any general compensation increase for 2017.

The Clerk-Treasurer reported that he and the Budget Chair, Councilor Herak, developed and the Town Council then adopted a tightly balanced budget for FY 2017. Revenues as forecast, were within the planned spending for the max levy controlled funds. This could be refined once the formal State Budget order is provided, but that would not be until February 15. The Clerk-Treasurer suggested that there would be little surplus revenue likely except that which will be needed to restore the proper appropriations to support the group dental and health costs, which were reduced to bring the budget to balance.

He further noted that the Town Council has the policy authority to fix compensation. It was the recommendation of the Clerk-Treasurer and the Budget Chair to finance any increases from the appropriated but unlikely to be disbursed balances in the existing budget as evidenced from the historic average of unused budget appropriations. It was noted that there were unused, lapsing appropriations in all categories of expense, especially in the category of personnel expenses.

The Clerk-Treasurer reported that the increased costs to payroll including the payroll taxes and pension but excluding overtime and the increase to the life insurance premium and workers compensation as follows:

Three percent increase over current salaries	\$196,100.93 system wide
Four percent increase over current salaries	\$261,467.90 system wide
Five percent increase over current salaries	\$326,834.88 system wide
Eight percent increase over current salaries	\$522,935.80 system wide

The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that the cost by fund for the five percent would be approximately \$201,000 to the Corporation General Fund, approximately \$45,000 to the Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, approximately \$35,700 in the Parks and Recreation General Fund, and \$5,900 in the Redevelopment General Fund. The clerk-treasurer opined that it was unlikely that the identified funding source could support anything greater than five percent.

The Town Council discussed whether there should be a separate increase for the Police Department as requested by the F.O.P. apart from the rest of the municipal workforce. The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that he knew that detaching sworn pay from all other full-time workers for general increases has not been municipal policy or practice for at least the last 45 years. He did not research further. In addition, he noted that detaching pay is considered a form of "*silo-ing*", which is not regarded as a best practice in municipal administration. At least for 45 years, the Clerk-Treasurer noted, Highland has observed what the public administration literature regards as a best practice.

The Town Council and the Clerk-Treasurer discussed also whether the raises should be granted as a percent across the board or as a percentage of pay allocated as a per capita amount.

The Clerk-Treasurer indicated that he did not expect or seek an increase for 2017, so except for the request posed by the representatives of the F.O.P. to have the increase determined before the end of the year, the Town Council could adopt its ordinance at its first meeting in the new year, and make it applicable to employees effective from the first full pay period. It was further noted that if no general increases were granted, the significant changes to full-time worker longevity pay, would provide an automatic increase to full-time workers on their anniversary of hire, from completion of one year through the completion of 30 years. The policy first instituted in 2016 doubled the longevity costs to every department.

It was also noted that the Clerk-Treasurer would need to be advised timely following the Christmas holiday (Tuesday) in order to permit the composition of the wage and salary ordinance.

There being no further business necessary or desired to be discussed by the Town Council, the regular study session of the Town Council of **Monday, December 19, 2016**, was adjourned at 8:45 o'clock p.m.

Michael W. Griffin, IAMC/MMC/CPFA/CPFIM/CMO
Clerk-Treasurer